The argument vpon the Epistle of the Apostle Saynt Paule vnto the Ephesians by. D. Erasmus of Roterodame.

EPhesus was sometyme the chiefe citie of the lesse Asia, a citie superstitiously geuen to the wurshipping of deuilles, and especially of Diana, for whiche cause it is called in the actes of the Apostles, the wurshipper of Diana, not of Diana the huntour, vnto whome the Poetes attribute bowe and arowes, but Diana with many pappes, whome the Grecians call Polymaston, and saye, she is the nource of all maner of beastes, after Hieromes reporting. For the temple of Diana at Ephesus, was in the greatest estimacion of al the world, so much that the Ethnike writours make special mencion of it, almost in al their writinges. These men gaue their whole studies vnto curiouse artes and sciences: as we may gather where we reade, that at the preaching of the Apostles, they brought in theyr bookes of enchauntmente, and burned them in the fyer, and whan they had coumpted the price, they founde it to be fiftie thousand siluerlinges, as it is purported in the. xix. Cap. of the Actes. And therfore to thentent he might withdrawe them from those great errours, he taried still among them three yeares, trauaylling all that while, to the vttermost of hys power, to bring the thyng to passe, that myght be to the profitable forwarding of their saluacion, albeit many of them made great resistence agaynste him, as he specifyeth hymselfe in an other place. And there he was cast to beastes: lyke as he maketh mencion, in his secounde Epistle to the Corinthians. And whan he departed from thence, he commaunded Timothee to remaine there still amonge them. And like as that Citie was full of Curiouse menne, and suche as were geuen to magicall artes, euen so had it many great learned men in it. By reason wherof, Paule, as he tempereth himselfe according to the maners and natures of all men, maketh often mencion of deuils and spirites, whan he sheweth the difference of good men and bad. Besides these, he openeth certaine darke hard sentences. For there is none of his Epistles, that hath so darke and hidde sentences in it, as this to the Ephesians. So as it shoulde seme, that this Epistle was the chiefest occasion, why Petre wrote after this sorte. Euen as our derely beloued brother Paule, accordyng to the wisedome geuen vnto hym, wrote to you, yea, almoste in euery Epistle, speaking of suche thynges: among whiche, many thynges are harde to be vnderstanden, which they that are vnlearned, and vnstable, peruert, as they do other scriptures to theyr owne destruccion. Therfore because these men aboade constauntly in the fayth, he exhorteth them to continue and goe still forwarde, vntill they were become perfite: putting them in remembraunce, what manier of people they were, whan they were addict vnto naughtines, & did seruice vnto wicked spirites: and what they are become now, that they are engraffed vnto Christe: and teacheth them withall, that althoughe the grace of the Gospell was promised vnto the Jewes, yet that by the eternall decree of God, it was rightfully enlarged vnto the Gentiles also: and that he was a minyster ordayned of God, to that same office. And forasmuche as he wrote thys Epistle, being in prison, he exhorteth them, not to cast downe theyr hartes for his afflictions, but rather thinke, that they haue so much the more cause to reioyce. These

thinges he treateth of in the first and secounde Chapters. In the other three, he
prescribeth the fourme of godly conuersacion vnto them, shewing what is to
be folowed, and what is to bee auoyded: the duetyes of the husbandes to the
wyues, and of the wyues vnto the husbandes: the offices of parentes to their
children, and of the children to theyr parentes: the dueties of maisters to
their seruauntes, and of seruauntes to their maisters. This Epistle
was written from the citie of Rome by Tichicus the Diacone,
whome he speaketh of in the end of the Epistle, calling him
a faithful minister. Ambrose sayeth furthermore, that
he wrote it in prieson, whan he was caried from
Hierusalem to Rome, and liued vnder suertie
without the tentes, in the tenement that
he had taken for hyre.

The ende of the Argume

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle of saincte Paule the Apostle to the Ephesians.

☙ The.i.Chapter.

Paule an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. To the sainctes, whiche are at Ephesus, and to them whiche beleue on Jesus Christ. Grace be with you and peace from God our father, and from the Lorde Jesus Christe. Blessed be God the father of our lord Jesus Christe, whiche hath blessed vs with all maner of spyrituall blessyng in heauenly thinges by Christe, according as he had chosen vs in him, before the foundacions of the worlde were layde, that we shoulde be holy, and without blame before him, thorow loue. Whiche ordeyned vs before thorow Jesus Christe to be heyrs vnto himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the prayse of the glorye of his grace, wherewith he hath made vs accepted thorow the beloued. By whom we haue redempcion thorow his bloud, euen the forgeuenes of sinnes, accordyng to the riches of grace wherof he hath ministred vnto vs aboundauntly in all wisedome and prudence. And hath opened vnto vs the mistery of his will according to his good pleasure, whiche he had purposed in himselfe, to haue it declared, when the time was ful come: that he might set vp al thinges perfitly by Christ (both the thinges which are in heauen, and the thinges whiche are in earth) euen by him, by whome we are made heyrs, and were therto predestynate accordyng to the purpose of hym by whose power all thynges are wrought, according to the purpose of his owne will: that we (which before beleued in Christ) should be vnto the prayse of his glorie, In whom also we beleue, for asmuche as we haue heard the worde of trueth; euen the Ghospell of your saluacion: wherin when ye had beleued, ye were sealed with the holy spirite of promes which is the earnest of our enheritaunce for the recouering of the purchased possession, vnto the prayse of his glory. *The texte.*

Paule an apostle, not of Moses, nor of any man, but of Jesus Christe, whose businesse I take in hande, being sente, not vpon myne owne head or by mennes Commissyon, but by the Autoritie and commaundemente of God the father, whiche, by hys sonne, hathe commaunded me to preache the doctryne of the Ghospell among the Heathens. I write this Epistle to al them that leade theyr lyfe at Ephesus, and leade theyr lyfe after suche sorte, that they applye theyr endeuoure to kepe them vnspotted from the vices and vncleanesses of this world, and with a sincere conscience, beleue the Ghospell of Jesus Christe, not lookyng for rewarde of innocencye and holynesse, any where elles, than from whence they receiued the example: nor waiting for the ende of their felicitie, of any other, than of whome sprong the beginnyng. In the meane season, I wish vnto you, not as those vse to doe, that measure their felicitie, by the dignities of thys worlde, but I wyshe, that God the Autour of all goodnesse (whome nowe, we may call euen our father, not for that, that he created vs onely, but muche rather, that being engraffed vnto the body of Christe, we are receaued into the enherytaunce of Chyldren) maye daylye encrease in you hys beneficence, wherwith he hathe frely deliuered you from the transgressyons of youre olde life, and of vngodlye hathe made you folowers of Innocencye and righteousnes: and so continue you in concorde, that you maye bee of one mynde amonge your selues, and that being reconsiled once to God, you maye take hede, that you breake not (in fallyng to synnes agayne) the promysse, that you couenaunted with hym, through Jesus Christ his sonne, by whome *Grace be vnto you & peace.*

and

and with whome, he geueth vnto vs al thinges, whom also we shal from hens-foorth woorthely call our lorde, forasmuche as he hath set vs at libertie from the tirannye of the deuil, with the pryce of his holy sacred bloud, and taken vs to himselfe, and hauing deliuered vs from the deuilles seruitude, hath made vs his owne. The seruitude is fortunate, that uniteth vs to Christ. Howbeit this

Blessed bee God the father.

thyng happened not vnto vs by chaunce, nor by oure owne meryte. But God the father of our lorde Jesus Christ, is altogether to be praised on our behalfe, that of hys free fauour, hath powred all gentle kyndenesse vpon vs, not besto-wyng those thinges vnto vs, that perteyne to the vse of this lyfe, and bodelye susteynaunce onelye, but also those excellent giftes, that auayle to the saluacion of soule, and lyfe immortall: which lyfe abydeth vs in heauen, through Christ, by whome the father hath set heauen gate wyde open. And because no manne shoulde be curious to aske, how commeth this so an exceadyng fauour? from whence cummeth such a wonderfull gentlenes? It was so resolutelye determi-ned throughe the goodnes of God, by an eternall decree, euen before the foun-

According as he had chosen vs.

dacions of the worlde were layed. For euen than he had chosen vs, that by hys sonne, by whome he created, gouerneth and restoreth all thynges, our former vicious liuing should be wyped awaye, and we be cummen holy and faultles, not onely in the syght of men, but also of God himselfe, who estemeth man ac-cording to the secret affectes of the minde, and that, not with the terror of Mo-ses lawe, (the seueritie wherof is tryed vnto thys purpose altogether vneffec-

Through loue.

tuall) but with the beliefe and loue required in the Ghospell, whiche wynneth more of suche as be willyng, than the lawe enforced by rigorous compellyng. For it is not a perfite seruice, that the seruauntes doe constrainedly, for feare of inconuenience, or for theyr maisters dyspleasure, but that, that children doe vncompelled by loue and good affeccyon. Which thyng was impossible to bee

Which or-dayned vs.

perfourmed by any strength of vs, had not God by hys eternall decree chosen vs into the roume and heritage of children, through onely Jesus Christe, vnto whome he hath so incorporated vs, through fayth and loue, that beyng made his members we may be one with him, so that by his participacion, we attain that thyng that was not due to our deseruynges. And therefore we may in no wyse attribute any thankes vnto our selues. In asmuche as it stoode with the

To the praise of the glory of his grace.

good pleasure of hym, that is naturally good, to declare and manifest his free liberalitie bestowed vpon vs, more playne and open to the whole worlde. We (as concerning our own strength) could not possibly be any thing els, than the enemies of God, and very abiect slaues, but that he hath reconsiled vs to him-selfe, by Christ, whome he loueth more than can be expressed, and of damnable wretches, hathe made vs acceptable deare children. As long as beyng snared with the daunger of sinne we were mẽbers of the deuil, we coulde neither loue God, nor be loued of God. But inasmuch as his most dere sonne hath redemed vs with the price of his most holy bloud from the bondage of sin, and encorpo-rated vs as mẽbers vnto himselfe, the father can not possibly choose but loue those, whome it pleased him to make partners with hys sonne. This benefite is surely inestimable, but not withstanding suche was the will & bounteous lar-gesse of almightie god, which although it be manifestly apparẽt in euery thing, yet it more peculiarely abounded vpon vs, forasmuche as he openeth vnto vs (as a merciful harted father vnto his children) the secret mistery of his eternal wil, so many long yeres hidden from the world, the knowlage wherof is most

hygh

hygh wisedome and chiefe prudence, much more excellent than that knowlege, wherin being singularely learned in humayne disciplines, ye haue excelled o- ther sortes of men euer vnto this day. Mannes wit atteineth the knowlege of the secretes of nature, & yet whan they are knowen to the uttermost they make no man any thing more godly at al. But this secret mistery, that we here speake of, no reason of mannes mynde coulde attaine, onles God himselfe had opened it vnto our knowledge to bring vs to true perfite felicitie. But if a man would aske, for what cause hath God kept it close so long, and now at length manifes- ted it plainely: I haue nothing to aunswer, but that it so pleased the good wil of him, that willeth al for the beste, in asmuche as he is goodnes it selfe. That, that is new vnto vs, is not new with him. For that that he shewed open to the world in sending his sonne now in the later dayes, was eternally decreed with the father and the sonne, albeit he would by his certayn & vnspekable counsail haue it secretly hidden, until his determined time were fulfilled, to open this se- cret vnto mankynde. Wherin the losses of tyme, that the people in times past mispent in vaine seking saluacion, some by the outward obseruacion of Moses law, some by the studie of philosophie, some by superstitious religion & wur- shipping of deuils, should be expelled, and the whole summe of all thinges y^t ap- perteine to true innocencie & to true godlines, should be ascribed only to Christ, besides whom, no man ought to desyre any thing, for asmuch as he, being the only fountayn, is content to gratify our peticions with any good thyng, that is eyther in heauen or earth. For God the father hath appoynted him to be the head of all, that all men should depend of hym only, and to trust to receiue at his hand, whatsoeuer is rightly to be desired, and to acknowlege that it cum- meth of him, whatsoeuer he of his bounteous liberalitie bestoweth vpon vs. By whome also, such aboundant felicitie hath chaunsed vnto vs, that we wer chosen vnto the lotte and enheritaunce of immortalitie, not of our owne deser- uinges, but because we were predestinate to it by his decree lõg a go, by whose arbitrement and power all thinges are ordred and disposed by his vnsearche- able counsel on our behalfe, according to his owne wil, who, forasmuch as he is the best & the most wise, he cannot possibly wil any thyng, but those thinges that are both best & wisest. Such was his determinate wil, that we should be called vnto this enheritaunce & felowship of Christ, not for our own desertes, but of his free benignitie, we that through the monicyon of the prophetes say- inges, had in a maner fixed our hope in Christ promised vnto vs, yea euẽ afore the truth of the gospel came to light: so that this benefit should not be ascribed to the obseruacion of Moses law, but that al the praise should wholy redound to the glory of the goodnes of God, who was content frely to geue it to vs by his sone. Neuertheles we Iewes wer not called alone to the promised felow- ship of Christ, although in distrusting the shadowes of Moses lawe, we haue embraced the truth of the ghospell, wherof we trust assuredly to receiue true saluacion, yea without any helpe of the lawe at all: but you also albeit you are vncircumcised, yet assone as ye beleued in the same gospell, you were chosen in- to the same felowship. For we are not debtours vnto Circũcisiõ, in y^t we are re- ceiued into the hope of immortalitie. but vnto fayth, which if you haue as wel as the Iewes, what should let you frõ the gẽtle goodnes of god? The cutting a- way of ye foreskin is a marke to discerne ye Iewe frõ the Heathen. But ye marke of the gospel extẽdeth further & is not printed vpon the bodye, but in the soule. With this signe, all are marked indifferentlye of what nacion soeuer they be,

In al wis- dome and prudence.

According to his good pleasure.

That we may to his prayse.

In whome we also.

 that

that embrace the doctrine of the gospel, and beleue his promisses. Some will aske, what token is it, that discerneth the Christians from the wicked? Truely the holy gost, and the inward affect (not a seruile bonde affect, but such a one as is commonly in good children) which maketh vs with al our hart to beleue the promisses of the gospel, yea although they do not yet in this world presently appere. For ẏ enheritaunce wherinto we are engraffed, shal not be fully performed, but at the resurreccion of ẏ bodyes. Howbeit, he geueth vs his spirite in the meane season, as a pledge & ernest of ẏ promised enheritaunce. By thys token we are surely certified, ẏ god accepteth vs for his childrē, not doubting, but he wil take his owne to himselfe, whō he hath redemed by ẏ deathe of his sōne. For ẏ merciful gētilnesse of god is desirous to winne many, & wold haue his magnificence most specially knowē & notified to mākind, whiche, ẏ more it is opened abrode, ẏ mo shall speake of it. God in times past cared peculiarlye for ẏ Jewes, in that he deliuered thē frō the seruitude of ẏ Egipcians. But it was a small matter, to haue ẏ goodnesse of god set forth only in one naciō. His wil is to be praysed & extolled of al mē, inasmuche as he hath frely redemed al frō the bondage of sinne. For ẏ he estemeth as pertinent to his glory, ẏ not only the Jewes, but al the nacions of ẏ whole world through beliefe of the gospel, should be partakers of saluatiō.

Which is ẏ earnest.

Unto the praise of his glorye.

The texte.

Wherfore I also (after that I heard of the faith which ye haue in the Lord Jesu, and loue vnto all the sainctes) ceasse not to geue thankes for you, making menciō of you in my praiers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory, maye geue vnto you the spiryte of wisdō & reuelaciō by the knowlage of him selfe, & lighte the eyes of your myndes, ẏ ye may know what the hope is, wherunto he hath called you, and how riche the glory is of his inheritaunce vpon the sainctes, and what is the excedyng greatenes of his power to vswarde, which beleue accordīg to the working of that his mightie power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised hym from the dead, and set him on his right hand in heauenly thinges, aboue all rule, and power, and myght and domynion, and aboue euery name ẏ is named not in this worlde onely, but also in the world to come: and hath put all thinges vnder his fete, and hath made hym aboue all thinges, the head of the congregacion, whiche is his bodye, and the fulnes of him, that filleth all in all.

For this cōsideraciō, I passe not whether you be circūcised or not, whā I se euident tokens in you of euāgelical saluaciō, first in that you haue reposed your whole trust in the lord Jesu, thā in that you declare your Christian charitie towardes al Saintes the mēbers of Christ. For this cause I ceasse not to geue thākes for you. For Euāgelicall sincerite is of suche efficacie, ẏ it causeth vs to be glad of other mennes cōmodities, no lesse thā of our owne. And I make alwaies mēcion of you in my prayers, wherwt I daily call vpon God for ẏ aduauncement of the gospels businesse, ẏ he, which is god of al sortes of people indifferentlie, & of Jesu Christ also after his humaine nature, of whō also Christ hath to be god (vnto whō, as vnto the autor & foūtaine of al goodnes, the sūme of al glory doth wholy belōg) may geue vnto you, more & more ẏ ernest wherof I haue spokē, his spirite, to inspire into your mindes this heauenly wisedō, and the knowlage of this mysterie: that you maye knowe hym, that is thonly autor of all healthe, & that you may behold hym in the meane while, as it were, with iyes, not with bodily eiyes but with the iyes of the harte and mynde, that see through the light of faithe, wherewith the thynges are also seen, that are to come, whiche cannot be seene with the grosse bodily iyes: whereby you maye knowe that, which no humayne philosophie teacheth, how blissed the enheritaunce is, whiche he hath called vs to truste vpon: and how excellent ẏ dignitie of

May geue vnto you ẏ spirite of wisedome.

of this most plẽteous enheritaũce is, which the sayntes shal receyue, & howe great the largenesse, and how excedyng the greatnesse of his power is, which he declareth euẽ now in vs: the which also (as it were with a certain secrete enforcement þ cannot be expressed wt tongue) hath transformed & altred vs frõ our olde trade, after such sorte, that we contẽne al other thiges, & trust onely to him, & cõtẽning those thinges which we se, we hope after such thinges of him, as we se not, & such as he hath openly declared before in our head Christ: whõ of his mightie power hauing raised from death to life immortal, he hath exalted vnto so high honor, that he hath set him on his owne right hand in þ kingdõ of heauen, & geuen him autoritie ouer al other rule, potestate, power & lordship, and euery other name of dignitie or power, how excellent so euer it be aboue these afore rehearsed, eyther in this worlde or in the worlde to come, that he may be lorde not onely ouer bodely and earthly thinges, but also ouer spirituall and heauenly thynges. So ferre hath he subdued al thinges without excepcion vnder his feete. And to make our hope more stedfast and certayn, that we shall also come to the felowship of the same glorye, for asmuche as he hath made Christe lorde ouer all thinges, his pleasure was also that he shoulde be the head vnto al the whole flocke of the beleuing, that cleaue so fast to Christe, as the whole body is coupled to the head, that the one can not be disceuered frõ the other. Finally the glory of the head is common to the rest of the members, whereunto the head is so set aboue, that it powreth his good nourishment into euery one of them. The bodye is not perfit, onles the head be at it: and the head wanteth sumwhat, if the body be not set to perfitly consummate in all his mẽbres: whereunto Christ doeth seuerally powre his excellent giftes in such wise, that by himselfe he fulfilleth all thiges, and liueth and reigneth now whole and entierely perfit, hauing his members vnited vnto himselfe.

He hath brought in Christe. &c.

And hath made him aboue all thinges the head.

¶ The. ii. Chapter.

The texte.

And you hath he quyckened, wher as ye were dead in trespasses, and synnes, in the whiche in tyme passed ye walked, according to the course of this worlde, euen after the gouerner that ruleth in the ayre, the spiryte that nowe worketh in the chyldren of vnbelefe, emong whõ we all had our conuersacion also in tyme past, in the lustes of oure fleshe, and fulfilled þe wyll of the fleshe and of the minde: and were by nature the chyldren of wrath, euen aswell as other. But God whiche is ryche in mercye, (for his greate loue wherwith he loued vs) euen when we were deade by synnes, quickened vs together in Christ (by grace are ye saued) and raysed vs vp together with hym & made vs sytte together wt hym emong them of heauen in Chryst Iesu. That in tymes to come, he myght shewe the excedyng riches of his grace, in kindnes to vs ward thorow Christ Iesu. For by grace are ye made safe thorowe fayth, and that not of your selues. It is the gyfte of God, and cõmeth not of workes, lest any man should boast hym selfe. For we are his workemanshyppe, created in Christe Iesu vnto good workes, whiche God ordeined, that we should walke in them.

NOwe marke me this, how the father hath begon in a maner to accomplish euen now in you, that that is accomplished already in Christ, & shalbe afterward accõplished in you. Christ dyed and rose agayn, & shall neuer after dye any more. Certes he was not subiecte to sinne, albeit, forasmuche as he tooke vpon him an humaine bodie, he was subiecte to mortalitie. To be briefe, like as sin is a certain death of the soule, and the forewarning of eternall death: euen so is innocencie a certayne life of the soule, and the beginning of eternal life. But of this maner of lyfe, God, that geueth vs his spirite, is the prince. And the deuil is þ autor of death, hauing also a spirite of his owne, wherwith those that

be enspired, are rapt vnto the pleasures of this world, and plainely distrust the promisses of eternal lyfe. Christ dyed for our offences, and rose agayn to make vs sure of the immortalitie to come. In the meane tyme, after hys exaumple, you also being engraffed to Christ through baptisme, are dead to your sinnes and wickednes: wherein as long as you liued vngodly, you were dead in dede, for asmuche as you had affyaunce in nothing, but noysome shadowes of good thinges, wherwith this worlde for a tyme disceaueth suche, as wantyng the spirite of God, are lead by the spirite of Satan, whose tirannye in the meane while is permitted ouer this lower element. His spirite (I say) and he himselfe setteth out as it were his own power in them, that hauing no trust in the promisses of the Gospell, set theyr whole felicitie in visible and transitory thinges: and geue no eare to God the father, that allureth them to true felicitie, but had leauer serue that wicked cruell maister, whome in tymes past you serued, and not you alone, but all we also. For albeit the law restrayned vs from the wurshipping of Images, yet our lyfe was altogether defyled with noysome lustes of corporall thynges, by the enforcemente whereof, we passed of the tyme, not doyng those thynges, whiche the holy ghoste commaunded, but those that our owne mynde, geuen to filthie affectes, bad vs doe. By reason wherof it came to passe, that like as they, which are encorporated to Christe through fayth, appertayne to the enheritaunce, that is promised to obedient children: euen so we as disobedient children, should haue belonged to a farre contrary enheritaunce: that is to say, we should haue becomen the companions of hym, to whome we had ioyned our selues. That death is eternal, that is appoynted to the wicked. Wherunto we also were subiect, asmuche as other, touchyng our owne state, and condicion. We had addicted our selues vnto it of our owne free choice, but it was not in our power to wynde vs agayne out of that most miserable seruitude. Nowe you haue heard of our death, now you haue harde of our destruccion, but whereof commeth lyfe, whereof commeth saluacyon? Truely not of our desertes, nor yet by the benefite of Moses lawe. Whence than? Surely of the free largesse of God the father, whose bounteousnesse and louyng affeccion is so plenteous and so exceadingly great to mankyndewarde, that he hath not onely not punished vs according to our desertes, but also whan we were dead by reason of our sinnes, he hath called vs agayne to lyfe together with Christ. This I say, was not of our deseruing, but came of free gyft. And he hath not only called vs agayne to lyfe with hys sonne, but also he hath caryed vs vp frõ these thinges ẏ are benethe, vnto the thinges that are in heauẽ, & there hath placed vs through Christ Iesꝰ: by whõ we haue indifferently together whatsoeuer he (our head) hath: & do possesse now in hope, all ẏ we shal shortly after possesse in very dede. Thus it was his wil, that at the resurreccion, whan his promisses shal euidently appeare, he may declare his most aboũdant liberalitie, which it pleased hĩ of his free goodnes to powre vpõ vs, not for our own good dedes sakes, but for the merites of Iesꝰ Christ. For the thing is often to be rehearsed, ẏ ought to be fixed mostedepely in your hartes. It cũmeth of fre grace, I say, that you haue obteined saluacion, from the destrucciõ, wherĩ ye were tangled: lest ye should folow the error of some of the Iewes, which thinke to be saued for obseruing the prescriptes of Moses law. You are endebted for your saluacion to fayth, wherby ye beleued the gospell, & yet you may not brag of faith, as though it come of your selfe. Christ loued you first, & hauing drawen you to himselfe, he hath geuen you power, that you should loue hym agayne.

In the children of vnbelefe.

And were by nature the childre of wrathe.

But God whiche is riche in mercie.

By grace are ye made safe.

It is the gift of god.

And he it is, that hath freely powred into you the gift of fayth: by the whiche you should set darkenes apart, and see the lyghte of the Ghospels veritie. It is wholy therfore to be ascribed vnto his fre gift, so that no man hath thereof to boast as though it were of his owne. In that we are created, we are endebted to God. Agayne, in that we are regenerate by faythe and baptisme, and as it were made a newe, after an other maner, we are diuorced from the felowshyp of our parent the sinfull Adam, and engraffed in Christ, the prince of innocēcie: to the intent that by the helpe and exaumple of him, we should from hensforth apply the offices of true godlinesse, & that renouncing the olde man, we shoulde represent the new man in new dedes, and become so ferre vnlike to oure selues in condicions, that a man might iustly say, it were not we. For God, by the doctrine of the ghospell, hath opened vnto vs the rewarde of Immortalitie, to the intent we should preace hard vnto it through innocencie of lyfe and well doing. For the euangelical faith is not an idle matter, but hath an inseparable companion, charitie, whiche causeth moe dueties to be done of the willyng, than the prescriptes of the lawe are hable to enforce of the constrayned.

For we are his workemanship.

Wherfore, remembre that ye being in tyme passed Gentiles in the flesh, were called vncircumcisyon from that whiche is called circumcisyon in the flesh, whiche circumcisyon is made by handes. Remember (I saye) that at that tyme ye were without Christ, beyng aliantes from ye commen welth of Israell, and straungers from the testamentes of the promes, and had no hope, and were without God in this world. But now by the meanes of Christ Iesu, ye which sometime were farre of, are made nye by the bloude of Christ. For he is our peace, whiche hath made of both, one, and hath broken downe the wal that was a stoppe betwene vs, and hath also put away, throw his fleshe, the cause of hatred, euen the lawe of commaundementes contayned in ye lawe written, for to make of twayne one newe man in him selfe, so making peace, and to reconcyle both vnto God in one body thorow the crosse, and slewe hatred therby: and came and preached peace to you whiche were a farre of, and to them that were nye. For thorow hym we both haue an entraunce, in one spirite vnto the father.

The texte.

The yoke of Moses law is not layed vpon you. For one onely law of Christian Charitie, is sufficient to accomplishe all dueties. The Iewes are not endebted to theyr lawe for theyr saluacion, but yet you are so much more bounden to the goodnesse of god, as you were more far of than they from the true worshipping of god, & from true religiō. Therfore yt ye may the more vnderstāde, how muche you are bounden to the bountie of God, for being nowe as ye are, your duetie is to remember, what ye haue bene afore tyme. For you were sumtyme Heathens, after the corporall distinccion of kynred, whome the nacyon of the Iewes, bragging of their carnal circumcision that is done with handes, name contumeliously vncircumcised, and repute them for prophane persons and abhominable, supposing this felicitie, that was promised lōg agoe by the oracles of the prophetes, to belong peculiarely to themselues: and not vnderstandyng that they be reputed as vncleane persones before God, whose inward myndes are vncircumcised. But you at that time were vncircumcised both in body and soule, being so muche more abiect & in miserable condicion than the Iewes, in that ye had no hope of Christes benefite to you warde, that is to saye, because you were vtterly astraunged, aswell from the tytle and felowshyp of the nacion of Iewes, vnto whome he semed to be peculiarly promised, as also exiled from the couenauntes of God, wherin he promised in saying to Abraham the father of that nacion. In thy seede shall all nacyons bee blessed.

Hauing no hope.

Gene. xxii.

And

And to bee briefe, there remayned no apparente hope of your saluacion, in asmuche as being wurshippers of deuils, ye had no knowledge in thys worlde of the true God, where as the Jewes called him theyr God, and he agayn called them hys people. Neuerthelesse, as soone as the trueth of the Ghospell shewed furth his lyght, Christe turned the course of thynges vpsyde downe, and broughte so to passe, that you, whiche seemed nothyng to perteyne vnto God, were nowe knyt moste nere vnto him not by the circumcision of the foreskinne, but by the bloud of Jesu Christ, with the price wherof ye were not onely deliuered from the sinnes of your olde conuersacion, but also reconcyled vnto God the father. In tymes paste, you were at discorde with the Jewes, yea you were at discorde with God: but Christ the Autour of peace and concorde, stroke away al the difference of circumcised, and not circumcised: he toke away the ceremonies of Moses law, as it had bene a wall, that deuyded the concord betwene the Jewes and the Gentiles, so that two sortes of people, beeyng afore most ferre different one from the other, should agree and growe together in one, vtterly expelling theyr olde grieues. For before Christes cummyng, the gentiles did wonderfully abhorre the Jewes obseruaunces, as superstitious thinges: and the Jewes contrariewise were in such conceipt with themselues by reason of their ceremonies, that they held al such accursed as were without them. Christ therfore by his woonderful deuise, abolished and brought out of vse that hated lawe, that consisteth onely in the prescribed carnall ceremonies, so that he would neyther alyenate the Jewes, nor presse the Gentiles with the burthen of it. For he beyng very God, and very man after the fleshe, obserued the commaundementes of the lawe, and yet he testifyed, that the saluacyon, which he brought after the spirite, belonged no lesse to the Gentiles than to the Jewes, so that now you shoulde neyther be abhominable because of your vncircumcision, nor the Jewes any stouter because of theyr circumcision, but that in dispatchyng the olde cankerdnesse of bothe those nacions, he mighte of two make one new, to growe together into one new man Christ, the common sauiour indifferentlye of them both. And lyke as he made the Jewes and the Gentiles at one betwene themselues, euen so he made them both at one with god, that there should be nothing to breake the atonemēt, but that the thinges in heauen and the thynges in earth, shoulde bee ioyned together as it were into one body. The death of Christe, which he suffered for our sinnes, hath vnited vs to God, with whome no man is at peace, that hath delyghte in synne. And forasmuche as this peace is bestowed both to the Jewes and to the Gentiles indifferently, there is no cause, why eyther of them shoulde thinke them better than the other: specially in asmuche as the pledge and gage of the holy ghost, whereof we spake a litle before, is geuen commonlye to them bothe, without difference. Now we se it come to passe, that Esaye by inspiracyon prophecyed long agoe, should come. For Christ hath not offered the doctrine of the gospell to the Jewes onely, vnto whome this blessed felicitie semed to be peculiarely promysed, and whiche also after theyr sorte, were the true wurshyppers of God, but also vnto you, whiche were ferre of, bothe from the kinred of the people of Jewes, and from the wurshippyng of the true God: teaching thereby, that throughe hys deathe, bothe the flockes of shepe shoulde goe together into one shepefolde, and knowe hym to bee theyr onely shepehearde.

But nowe by the meanes of Christ Jesu.

For he is our peace.

Through his fleshe.

Makyng peace.

To you which were a ferre of.

He it is, that hath opened vn to vs the entraunce to the father, who before was, displeased at our sinnes, and none other hath opened this entraunce to the Iewes, than he who hathe opened the same to the Gentiles: but we are all bounden to him alone, in that we are now bolde to approche bothe to that merciful father, hauing confidence in that commune spirite, which inspireth this assured trust indifferently into the heartes of vs bothe.

¶ Now therfore ye are not straungers and foreyners, but citesens with the Saintes, and of the houshold of God: and are built vpon the foundacion of the Apostles and prophetes, Iesus Christ himselfe being the head corner stone, in whome what building soeuer is coupled together, it groweth vnto an holy temple in the Lorde, in whome ye also are built together, to be an habitacion of God thorowe the holy ghoste. The texte.

Now therfore, to the intente you shoulde not thinke your selues the wurse, because you came not of the stocke of Dauid or Abraham, as concerning the kinred of the fleshe, or because ye are without the lawe of Moses, in asmuche as after the spirite, ye are citezens and felowes of saintes, perteining to the house of God, which is builded, not of the Iewes onely, but of al them, that purely beleue the Gospell. The foundacions of this house, are the Apostles, the preachers of the Ghospel, and the Prophetes, who shewed long a goe in theyr prophecies, that the gifte of the Ghospell should now be indifferently common to all men. To thys foundacyon you are also faste layed. And to be shorte, Iesus Christe is the chiefe head stone of this building, whiche being layed in the corner, coupleth and kepeth the walle together on bothe sydes: by whose power and couplyng, all the buildyng of the beleuers, compacted together on euerye syde, dayly encreaseth, and ryseth vnto a perfitely holy spirituall temple, consecrated of the lord himself. And of this holy building you are also parte, whilest, lyke lyuelye stones layed vpon the same foundacyons, and holden togither of the same corner stone, you make, in purenes of mynde and spirite, vnto God an holye habitacle vnspotted from all synnes, and voyde of lustes. There bee none receyued into Moses temple but Iewes, but to this temple all they perteyne indifferentlye, that embrace the fayth of the Ghospell.

¶ The .iii. Chapter.

¶ For this cause, I Paule am a prisoner of Iesus Christe for you Heathen: If ye haue heard the ministracion of the grace of God whiche is geuen me to youwarde. For by reuelacion shewed he the mistery vnto me, as I wrote afore in fewe woordes, whereby when ye reade, ye may vnderstand my knowlage in the mistery of Christ, which mistery in times passed was not opened vnto the sonnes of men, as it is now declared vnto his holy Apostles and Prophetes by the spirite: that the Gentiles should be inheritoures also, and of the same bodie, and partakers of his promes in Christe, by the meanes of the Ghospell, whereof I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God whiche is geuen vnto me after the working of hys power. Unto me the leaste of all Saintes is this grace geuen, that I should preache among the Gentiles the vnsearcheable riches of Christe, and to make all men see, what the felowship of the mistery is, which from the beginning of the worlde hath bene hid in God, whiche made al thinges thorow Iesus Christ: to the intent, that nowe vnto the rulers and powers in heauenly thinges, mighte be knowen by the congregation, the manifolde wisedome of God, according to the eternall purpose, whiche he wrought in Christe our lorde, by whome we haue boldenes and enteraunce with the confidence whiche is by the fayth of him. The texte.

And

And that you maye geue the more constaunte credence herevnto, vnderstande, that I Paule, am laden with these bondes for no cause els, that is to say, not for any naughtie dede, but for Iesus Christes sake, vnto whō I trauayll to winne you, Gentiles, wherat the Iewes haue indignacion. Yf ye haue heard tell, that this office was committed to me of Christ himself, that I should preache the saluacion of the Gospel (whiche some afore tyme iudged to belong to none but to the Iewes) in euery place, yea euen among the Gentiles, of whose noumber you are. This secret mistery, being hidden before to other Apostles, Christ opened most chiefely to me, lyke as we begonne to speake briefely of before, in our writynges to other nacions, by readyng whereof, you may know, that I am not ignoraunt of the secret counsel of Christ, who whan he tolde Ananias beforehand, that I carie his name among the Gentiles, he commaunded me than to goe and dooe his message vnto the Gentiles that dwelled farre of. Whiche thing before semed abhominable, that wicked persones and Image wurshippers should be called to the felowship of the gospel. Notwithstanding it was so decreed with God long a goe, yea euē afore the world was made, and in a maner opened vnto the prophetes by inspiracion, albeit it was not playnly opened to the world, as it is now by me, that the Gentiles, through onely fayth of the Gospel, without helpe of Moses law, should attayn saluacion: yea in so much that the chiefest of the Apostles durst not admit suche as were not circumcised, vnto baptisme. But nowe it is playnely opened vnto the holye Apostles of Christe, and to hys prophetes, by inspiracion of the holy goste, that the Gentiles through faith are so vnited vnto the Iewes, that they are comen in to the felowship of ẏ selfe same enheritaunce, and growe in to all one bodye, reioyceyng in theyr common head, Christe, and by reason therof, are becomen parteners of all the promisses, that a byde suche, as beleue the Ghospel of Christ: to preache the which Ghospell, autoritie is commytted vnto me, and I ceasse not to dooe my commaunded office, labouring constauntly hitherto in the Ghospels busines, euen vnto emprisonmētes and fetters, not that I am any thing more, of mine owne strength, for so painful a busines, but he that appoynted that office to me, hath laied his owne helping hande to the same. And so it is, that I being (as concerning myne owne habilitie) feble and weake, am by his benefite strong and full of courage agaynst the stormes of al mischiefes. I boast not myne own worthines, for I cōfesse that I am the least of Saintes: but yet (as litle as I am) it hath pleased the goodnes of God, to putte me in trust with this businesse of moste weightie importaunce, that I shoulde publishe and preache among the Gentiles (whiche before this time knewe nothyng of God) the vnsearcheable richesse of Christ, which he offereth plenteously to all men: and bryng to lyght the thyng, that before was hidden, that the benefit of the ghospell is to be dispensed and ministred to all maner of nacions, whiche before was supposed to be geuen onely to the Iewes, althoughit was otherwyse decreed eternally of God, the maker and gouernour of all thynges: notwithstanding, his will was to haue thys Counsayll of hys diuyne intente, to be yet hitherto kepte secrete: whiche in these tymes he woulde so openly manifeste, and that by the congregation, wherinto he powred suche aboundaunce of spirituall giftes, that his manifolde

By reuelacion shewed he the mistery vnto me.

Vnto me the least of al Saintes is this grace geuen &c.

manifolde wisedome whiche with wounderfull deuises disposeth all thinges, through death geuyng life, through shame exaltyng to glorye, through humilitie aduauncyng Goddes maiestie, whiche no man in times paste coulde haue Imagined, shoulde nowe bee brought to lyght, not onely to the brode worlde, but euen to prynces, and chiefeste of Angelles and deuilles, that haue to doe in the skyes and in the uppermoste parte of the ayer: whiche thynges, al beit they myght gesse should come to passe, that mankynde should once be redemed, yet this was not knowen, by what reason, the wisedome of God had eternallye decreed, to bring it to passe: whiche thing nowe at length was openlye knowen, whan he sent his sonne into the world, who hauing taken vpon him an humain bodye, would by vnspeakeable meanes, vnite and couple the congregacion to hymselfe, whereof our lorde Jesus Christe should bee the head: by whome, like as Innocencie chaunced vnto vs, in that, that our sinnes were doen awaye, euen so chaunced vnto vs an assured truste also, that as children, we shoulde not be afraied to approche vnto the father, whose displeased countenaunce we durst not afore beholde. For what shoulde we bee afrayed of, hauyng suche a heade, that in no wise suffreth any of his membres to perishe, albeit here in the meane season we suffre sum affliccion.

Wherfore I desire, that ye faint not because of my tribulacions that I suffre for your sakes: whiche is your prayse. For this cause I bowe my knees vnto the father of our lorde Jesus Christ: which is father ouer all that is called father in heauen and in earth, that he would graunt you, accordyng to the riches of his glorie, that ye maye bee strengthed with might by his spirite in the inner man, that Christe maie dwell in your hertes by faith, that ye beyng rooted and grounded in loue, mighte bee hable to comprehende with al payntes, what is that bredth and length, depth and heigth: and to knowe the excellente loue of the knoweledge of Christ, that ye mighte bee fulfilled with all fulnes, whiche cummeth of God. Unto him þ is hable to doe exceading aboundantly aboue al that we aske or thinke, according to the power that worketh in vs, be prayse in þ congregacion by Christe Jesus, thorowout al generacions from time to tyme. Amen. — The texte.

This secrete counsayle of God, forasmuch as I preache boldely in euery place, I suffre exceadyng punishemente, of such, as yet cannot possibly be perswaded of this matter. But I beseche you, let not myne afficcions, whiche I suffre for your sakes, any thyng disquiete or dismaye you. For there is no cause why you shoulde be ashamed of suche an Apostle, though I bee laden with fetters. For like as the crosse of Christe is our glorie, euen so my fetters, which I weare not for any euill dedes, but for the sinceritie of the Ghospel, are for your honestie, and no rebuke. For, the more displeasures we suffre with a constaunt mynd for the Ghospell of Christe, the more entierly we cause the people to beleue, that the promises of Christe are not vayne, inasmuch as through assured hope of them, we faint not for any displeasures of this life. And it is not Joyous to me onely to suffre for the ghospelles businesse, but it also becommeth al men, that are entred vnto Christe, to folowe the example of their autour and head. And truely for this cause sake, I bowe my knees, and praye earnestly euen from the botome of myne harte vnto God our father, and the same, the father of our lorde Jesus Christe, of whome, as the supreme head, dependeth all spirituall kynred, wherby are incorporated together whether they bee angelles in heauen, or faithfull people vpon earth: and of whome onely, as of the fountaine, springeth whatsoeuer is belongyng to true felicitie: that like as he hath begonne to declare hys

That he would graunt you accordig to þ riches of his glory.

Which is father of all.

aboundaunte glorye in you, so he maye more and more augmente his liberall goodnesse to you ward: that as you are engraffed to Christ through baptisme, and as it were borne newe agayne, so you maye gather courage and strengthe with daylye encrease, not accordong to the bodye, but accordyng to the mynde and soule, that is to saye, by the gyfte of the spirite of the father, continually encreacyng in vs, by whome we are made stronge and valiaunt, to withstande al dredes of persecucion: and that the constancie of your fayth maye be suche, that you thynke surelye, that Christe will neuer fayle you, but rather dwelle inwardly in your hertes, for þ faythful trustes sake, wherwith you commit your selues wholy vnto him. For with such is he most specially presente, as distruste theyr owne strength and depende wholye of his helpe. And this shall the rather come to passe, yf hauyng a Ghospellike fayth , you practyse also a Ghospellike charitie, knittyng the one to thother, so as it maie vtterlye reste and take rote in

Ye beeyng rooted and grounded in loue.

your soules, to þ entent, that being establisshed and grouded vpon this sure foūdacion, you maye waxe greater, and greater in your spirite, and after a certayn wise, be correspondent to the vnmeasurable spirite of God, that you maie grow and go forward so perfitely, that not onelye with the Iewes, but also with the vniuersall multitude of Sayntes , whiche are encorporated to the bodye of Christe, through the beliefe of the Ghospell, you maie bee hable to comprehend how infinitely the goodnesse of God extendeth it selfe, and how it is not restrai-

myght bee hable to cōprehende

ned within narrowe bondes and limittes: in heigth reachyng vp to the angels, in depth pearcyng downe to the helles, in length and breadth spreadyng it selfe vnto all coastes of the worlde: and that you maye be hable also to vnderstand the inestimable charitie of Christe towardes mankynde, whose knowledge excelleth all the knowledge of man, how excellente so euer it be. And that you may in these gyftes so encreace, that as perfite and lustye membres, you maye bee answerably mete for so noble a heade, and so hygh a father. For lyke as the bodyly byrth hath degrees of ages, hath his encreases, and hath his measure, as long as his growing time endureth, euen so this spiritual generacion also hath his childehood, hath his springing time, and than his perfite lusty growen age. For these thynges (I saye) I praye often vpon my knees vnto God the father. Which thinges in dede although thei be greate, and far aboue mannes power,

Unto hym that is hable.

yet I desyre them of hym, whose power is so myghty that we cannot possibly Imagyne so great a matter, but he is hable to dooe muche greatter: and is so good and so gentill, that he dooeth not onelye accoumplishe our desyres wyth his owne liberalitye, but also geueth vs muche more than we can hope for: And yet there is nothyng in this behalfe dooen other throughe our merites or powers . For we are nothyng elles, but the instrument of the diuyne power, that worketh his owne myghte in vs, so that all glorye, that florissheth in the congregacion, is wholy to be ascribed to hys largesse, through Christ Iesus, by whose participacion the congregacion is endowed with so excellente gyftes: and of this glorye there shall bee no ende, but it shall endure through all ages eternally, like as the congregacion of Christ shal also haue none end. That, that I haue sayed, is certayne and vndoubtedly true.

The. iiii. Chapter.

I Therfore (whiche am a prysoner of the Lordes) exhorte you that ye walke worthy of the vocacion wherewith ye are called, with al lowlines and mekenes, with humblenes of mynde, forbearyng one an other thorowe loue, and be diligente to kepe the unitie of the spirite thorowe the bonde of peace, being one body, and one spirite, euen as ye are called in one hope of your calling. Let there bee but one Lord, one fayth, one baptisme, one God and father of all, whiche is aboue all, and thorowe all, and in you all. The texte.

Now inasmuche as ye perceiue, from how vyle a condicion, unto what great dignitye, from how depe desperacion, to what excellente benefites you are called, I beseche you for these cheines sakes, wherwith I am tyed, not for mine owne faultes but for the glorye of God and your saluacion, that asmuche as remaineth behynde, you would conforme youre selues in honest conuersacion answerably to your professiō, & to the mercifulnes that God hath shewed to you wardes. And that shalbe doen, in case the excellencye of your profession make you not to hygh minded nor to fearcely stomaked. But see that all the custome of your life resemble in all thynges, true modestye, gentilnesse and lenyte of mynde, so that one disdeyne not an other, but euerye one suffre other through mutual charitie: rather one bearyng with an others weakenesse for the tyme, than whan euerye one goeth about to holde his owne with tothe and nayle, you breake concorde and uniforme loue, wherwith you are made one and united together through the bonde of peace. For it is not conueniente, that such mennes myndes, should be deuided among thēselues, that haue so many thynges commune. You are al one bodye, you depende all of one heade, you haue all receiued of one selfe spirite of Christ, and you are also indifferentely called all into one hope of inheritaunce. There is one lord of al Jesus Christ: al haue but one profession of faith, there is but one baptisme of al, that by the meanes of Christes death is indifferently effectuall, unto all that beleue the Ghospell, whether they bee circumcised or uncircumcised. Finallye there is but one God and father of al, that as the prince & autour of all thynges, hath dominion ouer us all in suche sorte, that by his spirite, wherewith he gouerneth us, he geueth hymselfe unto all, and kepeth continual residence with us, releuyng and helpyng us in all thynges: so that it is the gifte of onely one, what good thyng soeuer we haue.

Unto euery one of us is geuen grace according to the measure of the gyfte of Christe. Wherefore he saieth: when he went up on hye, he led captiuitie captiue, & gaue gyftes unto men. That he ascended, what meaneth it, but that he also descended first into the lowest partes of the earthe. He that descended, is euen the same also that ascended up, aboue all heauens, to fulfill all thinges. And the verye same made some Apostles, some Prophetes, some Euāgelistes, some shepeherdes and teachers: to ẏ edifiyng of the saintes, to the worke and ministracion, euen to the edifiyng of the bodye of Christe, till we all come to the unitie of fayth and knowledge of the sonne of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the full perfect age of Christe. The texte.

This ought in no wyse to hynder our concorde, that the giftes of God bee not all after one sorte nor all a lyke appearyng in al menne, no more than we see the mēbres of the body not agree or to be racked one frō an other because thei be not indifferētly apte al to one use, or fele not al alike the influence of ẏ head. But this maner varietie ought rather to be ẏ occasion of unitie. For inasmuch as no mēbre of the body is hable fully to uphold himself of himself, it commeth to passe, ẏ

euery one muste haue nede of an others offyce, so that one maye not contemne an other. But this distribucion of gyftes, dependeth not of vs, but of the wyll of God, who distributeth vnto euerye man lesse or more as it semeth expedient in his owne syghte. There is no cause, why he shoulde bee disdeyned, that hath lesse, nor why he shoulde exalte hymselfe, that hathe more. That one is after Goddes measuryng, thys other is after Goddes plenteous enlargyng, and all by Christe, which geueth also these thynges equally with the father. Certaynly this is the thyng ye the Psalmiste by the inspiracion of the holy gost spake of so long agoe. For Christe hauyng all ready conquered the helles, is ascended alyue agayne into the hygh kyngdome of the father, and hath caryed with him the ensigne of his conqueste, euen the flocke of vs myserable captiues, whom he hath frely delivered from the tyranny of the deuyl and synne. And from thence, of the fathers liberalitie, he hathe geuen throughe the holye ghoste soondrye kyndes of gyftes, and bestowed them among menne, as it is the solemne manner of suche as wynne the maistrye in a tryumphe, to throwe downe tokens of tryumphe abrode among the people. He sent downe giftes from heauen, and heauenly thynges they were, that he sent. To be briefe, where it is sayed: he ascended, doeth it not consequently folowe, that he before descended? And there is no descencion but from aboue: so that the descencion is before, and the ascencion after. For none deserueth worthelye to bee exalted on hyghe, but onelye throughe lowlinesse and humbleyng of hymselfe. To conclude, after moste lowe humblyng, foloweth moste hygh aduauncing. From the moste hyghe heauen, than the whiche nothyng can be higher, Christ deiected himself euen vnto the helles, than the which nothyng can be lower. And for this cause sake he was worthilye exalted aboue the highest of all the heauens, and so tooke his bodily presence out of oure syghte; to the intente to accomplishe all thynges from aboue wyth heauenly giftes, and after an other maner of reason, to be now more effectually presente with vs, than whan he was conuersaunt emong vs vpon earth. He forsoke not his body, but deuyded his gyftes vnto euery of his membres, after suche wyse, as none of them all should want anye thyng, albeit some were endued with more excellent giftes than some. For some he would haue to be chief, as Apostles, beyng leaders & autours of the Gospel preahing, & some to be prophetes that coulde expounde the hidde meanynges of Moses lawe, some to be euangelistes to occupye the Apostles roumes, and to carrye aboute the gospell from place to place. And some to be pastours and doctours, as byshoppes, to fede the flocke of Christe, with the meate of holy doctryne, and holsome example of good lyfe. And the reste he instructed, some with one gyfte and some with an other, to the intente, that of all these conferred together, the coumpanye of sayntes shoulde bee perfeitelye consummate and furnyshed, to the vse of euerye good offyce: and that the perfeit bodye of Christe beyng fully growen together in all his menbres, shoulde so bee cherished one with the succour of an other, and that the stronger membre shoulde beare for the tyme with the weaker, and the weaker marke and folowe the exaumple of the stronger, vntill we maye all at length cumme to equall strength of fayth, and with lyke perfeccion knowe the sonne of God, throughe whose helpe we maye wate bygge and lustye in the secrete encrease of mynde, after such sorte, that at length we may growe vnto a perfeit manne, and accordyng to oure measure, frame oure selues aun-

swerablye

swerably to our most perfite head: In whome was neither imbecillitie, nor errour neyther yet any defaulte.

That we hence forth should be no more children, wauering & caried about with euery winde of doctryne, by the wylines of men thorowe craftynes, wherby they laye awayte for vs, to deceyue vs. But let vs folowe the trueth in loue, and in all thynges growe in hym, whiche is the head, euen Christe, in whome yf all the bodye be coupled, and knitte together thorowoute euery ioynt, wherwith one ministreth to an other (accordyng to the operacion as euerye parte hath his measure) he encreaseth the bodye vnto the edifiyng of it selfe thorowe loue. The texte.

There is an age of the bodye, that geueth full strength to all the membres, and putteth away the tendernesse of chyldehood. And in semblable wyse vnto this, there is a lyke procedyng in the ordre of godlinesse, whereunto we ought all to geue diligent endeuour, that we be not from henceforth, as we haue been, wauerying lyke children, in vncertayne opinions, not addicte to any certayne decrees to attayne saluacion, but as men voyde of trueth, carryed about nowe into this, nowe into that iudgemente with euery wynde of doctryne: submittyng our selues (as it were peuishe chyldren) to the subtiltie and crafte of some certayne men, whiche trauayle not to teache vs Christe sincerely, but to catche vs through theyr subtill artes, and to snare vs with their craftie deceates, or with philosophicall reasons to bryng vs in doubte of those thynges, which by faith ought in no wise to be doubted of: or elles in stede of the Gospelles veritye to set before vs the shadowes of Moses lawe. But nowe hauyng once embraced the veritie of the Gospel, lette vs rather ioyne vnto it sincere charitable loue towardes al men, enforcing our continuall studye to this ende, that we maye profite not onelye in the knowledge of the trueth, but also in the continual diligente workes of charitie, so as all we beyng membres maye be answerably like vnto our head. And truely Christe is our head, who also is the trueth selfe, and hathe so loued vs, that he hath geuen hymselfe to make vs safe. To this head, it is requisite, that the membres be agreable: Inasmuche as from hym, the spirite of lyfe floweth into all the whole bodye, beyng compacte and set together of sondrye membres ioyned ordrelye one to an other, and pearcyng throughe euerye ioynt of the lymmes, which coulde not be, excepte the partes of the bodye were ioyned agreably one to an other, that lyfe may haue passage into thẽ from one membre to an other. For the hande or the fote beeyng cutte of, cannot possiblye haue any parte of the vertue, that commeth from the toppe of the heade. But forasmuche as the whole bodye is perfectly conglutinate in it self, it commeth to passe, that the spirite of Christe practiseth his efficacie in euerye membre, accordyng to their seuerall capacitie and ordre: and forasmuche as all the membres studye through mutuall loue to profite euerye one other, the whole bodye waxeth bygger and bygger, and is made lustye and stronge, so as it wyll not geue place in any condicion to the wyndes of false opinions, alluryng this way and that waye, to bryng it out of the trueth.

This I saye therefore, and testifie thorowe the Lord, that ye henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke, in vanitie of theyr minde, while they are blinded in their vnderstanding, being farre from a godly lyfe, by the meanes of the ignoraunce that is in thẽ, and because of the blindenes of their hartes: whiche being paste repentaunce haue geuen themselues ouer vnto wantonnes, to worke all maner of vnclennes, euen with gredines. But ye haue not so learned Christe. If so bee that ye haue hearde of hym, and haue beene taught in him, as the trueth is in Jesu: (as concerning the conuersacion in time paste) to laie from you that olde man, whiche is corrupte, accordinng to the deceauable lustes. The textẽ

Now of all these matters, that I haue gone about to open vnto you, with so many similitudes, this is the whole Sume. I do not onely monish but also desyre and beseche you for the lorde Jesus sake, vnto whom you are endebted for your saluacion, that as soone as you are once encorporated vnto hym, frame your selues lyke vnto hym, not onely in the synceritie of faith, and veritie of doctryne, but also in vpryght integritie of lyfe. Whan you were of the noumbre of the gentyles, you were answerablye lyke vnto theyr condicion. But nowe you are becomme other men and regenerate into Christe, it becommeth you also to be of other maners. The gentyles, forasmuche as they haue not receiued the trueth of the Gospel, are leadde with vaine opinions, woorshpping dumme Images in the steade of God, and mesuring theyr felicitie after the temporal commodities of this worlde. And the cause why they worshippe dead wares, and truste in transitorye thynges is, that they haue no knowledge of the true eternal lyfe, whiche is God. And forasmuche as he cannot be sene, but onely with the scoured iyes of the soule, for that cause he is not seen of them, whose harte is obscured, yea rather blynded, with the darkenes of naughtye lustes, and cloudes of infidelitie. And beyng geuen ouer to theyr owne naughtines, are growen at length to so high mischeafe, that as men out of hope to returne to amendement, and as those that fele not theyr owne vyle miserye, renne headlong into al kindes of abominacion and insaciable lustes, to doe all thyng that fylthye is, euen so ferre, that it were shame also to speake of. But the doctryne of the Gospell is ferre differente from suche kinde of menne. For of it you haue not learned folishe humayne opinions, but Christe hymselfe, the fountayne and example of all Innocencie, in case you haue truely herd hym speake inwardly, and are truely taughte by his spirite, that you to your powers maye diligently folowe those thynges that were truelye in Jesu, that is to wete, lyke as he was vtterlye voyde of all synne, and nowe hauyng conquered death, dwelleth in the glorye of Immortalitie, euen so you beyng also regenerate vnto hym, put of the old man that representeth the fyrste originall poyson afreshe through naughty venemous lustes.

The texte. To be renewed also in the spirite of your mynde, and to put on that newe man, whiche after God is shapen in righteousnesse and true holines. Wherefore put awaye lying, and speake euery man trueth vnto his neighbour, for as muche as we are membres one of another. Be angry, and synne not: let not the sunne go downe vpon your wrath, neyther geue place vnto the backebyter. Let hym that stole, steale no more, but let hym rather labour with his handes the thing whiche is good, that he maye geue vnto hym that nedeth.

Forasmuche as you are engraffed vnto the newe man Christe, throughe baptisme, bee you also renewed with hym, not after the bodye, but after the mynde wherein the spirite of Christe dooeth moste chieflye woorke: and laying awaye the maner of youre olde cankered lyfe, put on the newe man, whiche was made after a certayne spirituall sorte lately in you by the woorkemanshippe of God, yea made, as it were, by a certayne transformacion, that vnrighteousnes being abolished, Innocencie shoulde succede, and the vnclennesse of humayne lustes beyng taken oute of the waye, the holinesse of the Gospelles veritie shoulde take place. Loke therefore that you folowe that holines in euery condicion, and see that you desceaue not one an other with countrefaicte speache nor lying, but that euery one consider with himself the thing, that true is, and deale truely with his neighbour

bour, remēbring that inasmuche as we are al mēbres of one bodye, no man can hurte an other, but he muste nedes also hurte hymselfe. It is a great perfeccion not to be moued with angre, but in case through the frailtie of mannes nature any raze of angre come in your minde, remēbre (as the holy psalmographe geueth warning) so to restrayn your angre, whan it would barste out, yͭ it breake not out into scoldyng, or iniurie, or malicious hatred. And lette not your angre be onely vnhurtefull, but also let it remayne so litel whyle with you, that it bee sooner out of your stomakes, than the sunne from besydes the earth: leste whan the earth in the night season is naturally colde, you contrarie wise chause youre selfes in the meane tyme hootelye with angre. There is nothyng but concorde yͭ is hable to defende you safelye agaynste the assaultes of the deuyll, and yf it bee broken through malice and displeasures one agianste an other, you open a wikette for your enemye to breake in to your vtter destruccion. Where as concord is, the deuyll is feble, and where discorde is, there is he myghtye, so that yf you geue place to malice, you must perforce geue place also to hym. He that after the olde naughty facion of lyuyng robbed and polled others, now let hym abstayne not onelye from other mennes goodes, but also geue awaye liberallye of hys owne. And if he haue not to doe with all, let hym not disdeyne to get with his honeste hande labours, wherewith to succoure suche as be nedye.

Let no fylthy communicacion procede out of your mouth: but that which is good to edifye withall, as oft as nede is that it may minister grace vnto the hearers. And greue not ye the holy spirite of God by whom ye are sealed vnto the daye of redempcion. Let all bytternes and fearsnes & wrathe and rorying and cursed speaking be put away from you, with all maliciousnes. Be ye courteous one to another, mercyfull, forgeuyng one another, euen as God for Christes sake hath forgeuen you. The texte.

It is not ynoughe to kepe still the handes continente, excepte the tongue be also vnhurtefull. Many pestilent mischeafes a naughty tongue is woont to occasion: with filthy communicacion it infecteth, with backebiting it infameth, with false accusacion it destroyeth, with lying and periurie it deceaueth. Let no euil communicacion therefore procede out of your mouthe. For such as the speache is, such is the minde, yf you be of a pure mynde, it besemeth not impure communicacion to procede out of it. And it is not ynoughe for a Christian mannes cōmunicacion to be vnhurtefull, but it ought also to bee of suche sorte, that it bee spoken in season, and to so good purpose as it maye bee commodious vnto the hearers. But in case you doe other wyse, you shall not onely offende menne with vnprofitable, vnseasonable, and noysome communicacion, but also the holy spirite of God, that dwelleth in Christian hartes, by whome youre soules and bodyes are, as it were, marked vnto God. And it is furthermore conueniente for you, to bryng foorth that marke safe and fayre in that daye, whan you shall receyue the rewarde of youre Innocencye, at whiche daye you shal bee dysseuered from the coumpanye of the euyll. And trewelye thys spyrite is dryuen awaye and dyspleased with all kynde of vncleanesse, and canne not abyde to haue a doe wyth wrathe, wyth reuengement, nor with filthye communicacion, he is peaceable, gentyll and bounteous, and yf you haue truelye receyued hym, let al bitternes, swelling and fearcenes be ferre from your conuersacion. Let angre, loude speakyng, and scoldyng be so fer from you, yͭ no leauen

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of malice remayne in youre stomake, whereof these manner of myscheafes are woont to budde out. But rather bee you tractable and gentill among youre selues, readye to haue mercie, to pardone and to forgeue euery one other, yf any thyng chaunce to bee dooen amysse through errour and mannes imbecillitie: to forgeue (I saye) for Christes sake, forasmuch as God hath forgeuen you your offences by Christe once for al, howbeit the lord hath forgeuen his seruauntes vpon this condicion, that after his exaumple, we should also euery one forgeue oure felow seruauntes. For concorde can not possibly in any wyse continue among men, onles thei can beare paciently euery mã with the faultes of others.

The .v. Chapter.

The texte. Be ye therfore folowers of God as dere chyldre, and walke ye in loue euen as Christ loued vs, and gaue hymselfe for vs an offeryng and a sacrifice of a swete sauer to God. As for fornicacion and al vncleannesse, or couetousnes, let it not be once named among you, as it becommeth sayntes, or filthynesse or foolishe talkyng, or iestyng, whiche are not comly: but rather geuyng of thankes. For this ye knowe that no whoremonger, eyther vncleane persone, or couetous persone (whiche is a worshipper of ymages) hath any inheritaunce in the kyngdome of Christe and of God. Let no man deceyue you with vayne wordes. For because of suche thynges commeth the wrath of God, vpon the chyldren of disobedience. Be not ye therfore companions of them. Ye were sumtyme darkenes but nowe are ye lyght in the Lorde. Walke as chyldren of lyght. For the fruite of the spirite consisteth in al goodnesse and righteousnesse and trueth. Accepte that which is pleasyng vnto the Lorde.

Than forasmuche as by the holy goste you are the chyldren of God, see that you bee lyke your father in holines of lyfe, that you maye worthylye bee loued of hym for euer. For truely thus shal he shewe hys loue towardes you perpetuallye, yf you shewe loue among your selues one vnto another. And howe aboundauntelye greate the fathers loue was towardes vs, it appeareth playnelye by hys sonne, who loued vs so enteirlye muche, that not onelye he hathe frely pardoned al our synnes, but also offred himself vnto death vpon the crosse, to thintente, where God the father was before displeased and angred with vs, he should by meane of this sacrifice and offreyng of good sauour that smelleth swete in his presence, become louyng and mercifull vnto vs. This louyng charitie in case we folowe, as it becommeth vs to doe, we shal not onely be tractable, yf any thyng shall chaunce to be committed agaynste vs, but also we shall not drede, if occasion so require, for the commoditie of our neighboure to putte our lyues in daunger. But nowe to what purpose neede we to speake earnestly vnto you, touchyng suche vyces, as be to filthye and to grosse, as whoredome and al kinde of vncleanes, and insaciable desyre of money: from the which monstreous abominacions, a Christian mannes conuersacion oughte to be so ferre alienate, ŷ it wer shame to haue thẽ once spoken of among thẽ. For there be some thinges so execrable, that an honeste pure harte woulde euen abhorre once to thinke of thẽ. And it becõmeth sayntes, to be not only of honest cleane cõuersacion, but also to bee chaste mouthed & of pure communicacion. And we may not thinke it ynoughe, to be pure of woorde and cleane of lyfe onely, excepte we abhorre also to talke of foolishe friuolous fables, and vayne skirtes and iestes,

whiche

whiche as in other they maye be tolerated or commended, so truely in Christians they are nothyng fitte nor congruente. For Christians in theyr moste spedye Journaye to heauen, haue continuall batayle with vyces, and so daungerous battayle, that they canne haue no laysure to applye suche tryfles and sportes, but rather they haue to wepe. And whan the mynde woulde make merye, because of good successe and well spedyng, it oughte to make merye in hymnes and thankes geuyng to God. Howebeit I knowe well ynough, there be philosophers, that teache Carnal copulation out of mariage to be no sinne, because it is not punished by mannes lawe. And that couetous desyre of money is no faulte, because there is no temporall peyne appoynted unto it. But I woulde haue you understande for a certayntye, that whosoeuer is an whoremonger, or spotted with any kynde of uncleane lustes, or geuen to Couetousnes (whiche, forasmuche as he reposeth his principal felicitie in dumme transitorie substaunce, is reckoned litel better than a woorshipper of Images) shal not be admitted into the enheritaunce of Immortal lyfe, that God hath promised his to inherite commôly with Christ. And if you thinke that this paine is but light, than geue credence to them, that goe aboute to perswade unto you, that those synnes are but lyght. Suffer not your selues to be deceyued wyth suche maner of vayne friuolous communicacion, but take hede rather to the doctryne of the Gospell, seyng that for suche maner of synnes, althoughe they be not punished with mannes law, yet the vengeaunce of God commonly falleth upon the children of disobedience, for distrusting the promysses of the heauenly father, and reposyng theyr felicitie in suche kynde of thinges. Once you diuorced youre selfes from suche mennes company, and professed Christ. It standeth you therfore in hande to beware, that your conuersacion be not lyke unto the naughtynesse of them, that professe one waye and lyue ferre wyde an other waye. The darkenes of Ignoraunce hath bene yet hitherto the occasion of errour: And the trueth of the Gospel is sprongen up and wyped awaye all darkenes. And you in tymes paste, walked as in the darke night, and committed the shameful vyces that are doen in the night. But nowe God by the lyghte of the Gospel, hath enlumined your hartes, that you maye clerelye descerne, howe abominable the thynges are now, that before appeared to be pleasaunt & swete. The nighte hath no shame and couereth many thynges, that no man woulde bee bolde to doe in the clere day. Therefore see you ordre your conuersacion all together after suche sort, as you forgette not to consider, that you lyue in the daye, and are alwayes seene to theyes of God. He that taketh a Journeye in the night, many tymes stombleth, because he seeth not, where he shoulde goe by. And the daye on the other parte hath this commoditie: it sheweth what is to be folowed, and what is to be auoyded. For it teacheth us in euery condicion to flee from malice, cursed speakyng and dissimulacion, and in steede of them to folowe goodnesse, righteousnesse, and trueth: and generallye to marke that thyng alwayes, not that is pleasyng unto mê, nor ŷ is swete or delectable unto us, but ŷ which is acceptable unto the wil of god, after whose appointmêt our côuersacion ought altogether to be gouerned.

And haue no felowship with the unfruitful workes of darkenes: but rather rebuke them. For it is shame euen to name those thinges whiche are doen of thê in secret: but all thinges when they are rebuked of the light are manyfest. For whatsoeuer is manyfest, the same is light. Wherfore he saieth: awake thou that slepest, and stand up from death, and Christ shall geue the lighte. The texte.

Christe is the fountayne of our dayelyght: and yf you wyll continuallye cleaue vnto hym, your endeuour shal be to doe fruictefull honeste offices of godlines, and suche as be worthye of the lyght: and from henceforth be ashamed to haue a doe with the vnfruictefull workes of darkenesse. Now therfore take so good hede, that you slyde not agayne into your olde former darkenesse, that you may rather with your lyght bewray and reproue those naughty dedes, that they cōmit in theyr darkenes. For whā thei are not afraied to offend God, as oft as the night or secrete place hath takē away shame, the thynges that they do than, are so abominable, that it were very shame euen once to make reherfal of them. But as long as they offende, whyle no lyghte appeareth, they offende licenciouslye without punishement. But as often as they are bewrayed with the open light, than the vilenesse of the thyng begynneth to bee knowen, and the faultes so bewrayed, are amended and turned into better: that is to wete, whan the nyghte is turned into the daye, and the blyndenesse of harte vtterly expulsed. And yf your conuersacion be light, they shalbe ashamed of theyr owne filthynes, whan they see your Innocencie. And than it shall come to passe, that beeyng moued through your honeste godlye demeanour, they shall bee styrred vp to Innocencie, yf they see the lyght of Christe shynyng in you. For in deede thus sayeth the prophete. Wake thou that sleapeste, and ryse vp from the deade, and Christe shall geue the lyght. It is a very deade sleape, yea rather death it selfe, to bee ouerwhelmed with the pleasures of this worlde, and not to respecte the thynges that are eternall and vnfeynedlye good. And yet they cannot other wyse awake nor by any other meanes returne to lyfe, onlesse Christe spring into theyr hartes and wype awaye the grosse darkenesse of ignoraunce.

The texte. ¶ Take hede therfore how ye walke circūspectly: not as vnwise, but as wise men: auoiding occasion, because the dayes are euyll. Wherfore, be ye not vnwise, but vnderstand what the wyll of the Lord is, and be not dronke with wyne, wherin is excesse: but be fylled with the spirite, speakinge vnto your selues, in psalmes and hymnes, and spyritual songes, singyng and making melodie to the Lorde in your hertes, geuyng thankes alwayes for all thynges vnto God the father, in the name of our Lorde Jesus Christ, submittyng your selues one to another in the feare of God.

Therefore you of the Ephesians, vnto whome Christe, our bryght sunne, geueth hys clere lyght, take hede and loke about you, how and after what maner you walke, not leadyng your lyfe nowe after the maner of the gentyles, which through blyndenesse of harte perceyue not what is honest, but as it becommeth them, that vnderstande truelye the doctryne of the Ghospell, and with losse of all you haue, redeme this oportunitie to obteyne saluacion: whiche the more gredelye is to be layed holde vpon, ỳ this tyme is so perlously naught, and many thynges flowe in on euerie side, that are hable to withdrawe vncircumspect men from the synceritie of Christian doctryne. Therfore it standeth you in hand to take the more circumspecte hede, that throughe vnaduisednesse you geue not occasion vnto the wicked, ỳ eyther they maie be open aduersaries to the Gospel, or elles drawe you backe from your profession. This is the whole Summe of your saluacion, and in this behalfe you ought to be warely wyse, to wynke at other thynges, and to declare that you vnderstande perfeitlye what the lordes wyll is. For his desire is to haue al men brought to the saluacion of the Gospel, if it were possible. And it shalbe requisite for such as take that busines in hand, to bee sobre. For dronkenship is harteles, and vncircumspecte, and not onelye harteles, but also rashe and timerarious.

Therefore be in no wyse drounken with wyne, whiche is a thyng unnecessarie, and prouoketh lasciuiousnes: but be you filled with the swete wyne of the holy ghoste. For that is a fortunate ebrietie, that can stirre vs, not to wanton daunsynges or folyshe ballettes, wherewith the gentiles crie vpon theyr deuilles: but vnto psalmes, and hymnes, and spirituall songes, wherewith to reioyce, and syng, and make merye amonge your selues vnto the lorde: not with vncomly yellyng noyses, as madde drounken men are vsed to dooe, but inwardelye in your soules and in your hertes. This is a pleasure, this is a loue, this is a bankette woorthye of Christians, leste they shoulde excede the gentiles in drounken bankettynges. After theyr drounken pastimes, sorowe dooeth ensue, and many tymes also disease of bodye. But your myrth is a continuall merimente. For whatsoeuer chaunceth vnto you, whether it bee gladnesse or whether it bee sadnesse (gladnesse from our mercifull God, sadnesse from hym that laboureth for your saluacion) you are bounden alwayes to geue thankes for all thynges, beyng assured, that nothyng can happen, but to the beste auauntage of your eternall felicitie. But the thankes are to bee geuen vnto God, the autour of al good thynges to al menne: and the same is also the father and God of our lord Jesus Christe, by whome he geueth vs all thynges, and hym he wyll haue praysed in all thinges equally wyth himselfe. Christ hath submitted himselfe obediētly vnto ye father, and in lyke case it becommeth vs to submitte our selues vnto hym, not that it besemeth a Christian to be a terrour vnto a Christian, but those that reuerently folow Christ, as apperteineth, do not grudge to submit thēselfes euerye one to other, inasmuch as he, beyng the supreme head of al, hath submitted himselfe humbly vnder al. Let the inferiour acknowledge the autoritie of the superiour. And on the other syde, let the superiour conforme hymself vnto ye capacitie of the inferiour: so as ye rather he may do hym good. For he yt among Christians beareth moste rule, ruleth to none other ende, but to do the most good he cā.

¶ Ye women, submitte your selfes vnto your owne housebandes, as vnto the Lorde. For the housebande is the wyues head, euen as Christe is the head of the congregacion: and the same is he that ministreth saluacion vnto the bodye. Therefore, as the congregacion is in subieccion to Christe, likewyse let the wyues also be in subieccion to theyr housbandes in all thynges. Ye housebandes, loue your wyues, euen as Christe also loued the congregacion, and gaue hymselfe for it, to sanctifye it, and clensed it in the fountayne of water throughe the woorde, to make it vnto hymselfe a glorious congregacion, withoute spot or wrinkle, or anye suche thyng: but that it should be holye, and withoute blame. So ought menne to loue their wyues, as theyr owne bodyes. He that loueth his wyfe, loueth hymselfe. For no manne euer yet hated his owne fleshe: but nourysheth and cherissheth it, euen as the Lorde dooeth the congregacion. For we are membres of his bodye, of hys fleshe, & of his bones. For this cause shal a man leaue father & mother, & shalbe ioyned vnto his wife, and of two shalbe made one fleshe. This is a great secrete, but I speake of Christ & of the congregaciō. Neuerthelesse, dooe ye so, yt euery one loue his wife euē as himselfe. And lette the wyfe feare her husbande. The texte.

Let the wyues therefore acknowledge the autoritie of theyr housebandes, and be in subieccion vnto them, none other wyse, than the congregacion is in subieccion to the Lorde Jesu. For lyke as Christe is the heade of the congregacion, euen so is euery housband the head of his own wife. Neuertheles like as ye head hath preeminence ouer the bodye, to the entent the health of the body should depende of it: euen so is the housebande in autoritye ouer the wyfe, not to thintente to vse her cruelly like a tyranne, but to prouide for her wealth, because hys witte is more substanciall than hers. And yet the wife maye not bristle against her housebande, because he seeketh at her handes to bee more loued than feared.

The housebande is the wiues head euen as Christe is ye head of the congregaciō.

But her duety is to be somuch more in subieccion in al pointes, like as ye congregació is so much ye more in subieccion vnto Christ, as he hath more lowly submitted himself for the saluacion of her his spouse. And on the other parte, you ye be housbãdes, abuse not your autoritie lyke tyrannes ouer your wiues, but rather vse them with like louyng charitie, as Christ hath and doeth loue his congregacion, whome beyng an aduouterer and an obstinate rebel, he did not onely not caste of, but also gaue hymselfe vnto death, for the redemyng of her saluacion: and so of a defiled one he made her pure and holye, and where she was vncleane and foule, he made her fayre and goodlye: and yet caste her not in the teeth with her vyle filthinesse, but washed her cleane with the streame of his owon bloud, and scoured her in the fountaine of lyfe that worketh profitably by the inuocacion of the name of God, so as through his owne diligent goodnes he myght prepare for hymselfe a glorious wife, euen the congregacion: whiche nowe should neyther haue spotte nor wrincle, nor any suche lyke, that might be displeasaunt in the housebandes iye, but in euery point both fayre and faultles. And so it becommeth the housebandes to be lykewise affected towardes theyr wiues, that they leaue nothing vndone, whereby they maye make theyr wiues perfite Christian woomen, and to bee no lesse carefull for their wyues healthe, than the head is carefull for the health of the bodye. For the wyfe is the housebandes body. Admitte thy wyfe be of croked condicions, or a nyce wanton, or geuen to other vnthriftynesse: destroye her not with ragyng crueltie, but heale her and amende her with sobre lenitie. Correcte the faultes, so as thou loue thy wife neuerthelesse for all that. For what would the head doe, yf it see his bodye be full of sickenes or disease? would it beginne to hate it, and forsake it? or rather heale it, if it coulde, and if it coulde by no meanes heale it, yet at least beare with it, and cherishe it? Might it not be thought a great absurditie, if the head would wishe euill to his owne bodye? He that loueth his wyfe, loueth hymself, for she is parte of hymselfe: what man had euer so litle felyng of the senses of nature, to hate his owne bodye? What man dooeth not rather nourishe and cherishe hys bodye, what a maner a one so euer it bee, to make it better and lustier? Seyng that the very Ethnikes doe naturally no lesse than so, why doeth not Christian charitie worke the same in vs a great deale more, inasmuche as we are moued thereunto by the exaumple of Christe, who did not forsake his wife the congregacion (though she was disteyned before tyme, many sondry wayes, and a very whorishe naughty packe) but he clensed her, he pyked her, and made her perfectly trimme in euery poynt. Therefore, you housebandes doe the same vnto your wyues, that Christe hath doom vnto vs, that are the membres of his body, whiche is the congregacion, lyke as the wyfe is the bodye of the housebande, of whose fleshe and bones she is made, to thintent it maye be manifestlye knowen, that that thyng oughte in no wyse to bee diuorced asondre that is all one selfe same thing. For thus we reade in the booke of Genesis. For the wyues sake, man shal rather forsake father and mother, than forsake his wyfe: vnto whom he shall so kepe hymselfe, that of twoo there bee made one, in moste perfite coupling together both of bodies and soules. Nexte after God, we are most bounden to father and mother, & yet the wife is preferred a boue them. Herin is ment a certain vnspeakeable great misterie, howe that the thyng that was doen in Adam & Eue vnder a figure, should be performed in effect mistically in Christ and

Ye housbãdes loue your wiues as Christ also hath loued the congregacion.

He that loueth his wife loueth himself.

in the

in the congregacion. This inseparable coniunccio, whosoeuer wil wel weigh, shal perceiue that there lyeth hidde a great mistery. For lyke as Christ is one with the father, euen so would he haue all his to be al one with him. And albeit this mistery importeth greater circumstaunce, than can be nowe presently expressed, yet it is inough to haue applyed the exaumple to this ende, that euery man should loue his wife, none otherwise than he loueth himselfe: and considre that both he and she are al one selfesame thing, euen as Christ loued his congregacion whome he vnited entierely to himselfe. Finally it shall be the wyues parte, not only to loue her husband agayn, as her companion to liue together, but also reuerence him, for the autoritie sake that he hath ouer her. And than shall hartie loue continue long together goodly, in case both parties doe theyr dueties accordingly.

¶ The.vi.Chapter.

Children, obey your fathers and mothers in the Lorde: for that is right. Honoure thy father and mother, (the same is the firste cōmaundement in the promes) that thou mayest prosper, and liue long on the earthe. Ye fathers moue not youre children to wrathe: but ye shall bryng them vp through the norter and informacion of the Lorde. Ye seruauntes bee obedient vnto them that are your bodely masters, with feare and tremblyng, euen with the synglenes of youre hearte, as vnto Christe: not dooyng seruice vnto the eye, as they that go aboute to please menne: but as the seruauntes of Christ, dooyng the wyll of God from the hearte with good wyll, seruyng the Lorde & not menne. Knowyng this, that whatsoeuer good thyng any manne dooth, the same shall he receyue agayne of God, whether he be bonde or free. And ye masters dooe euen the same thynges vnto them, puttyng awaye threatenynges: knowyng, that your master also is in heauen, nether is there any respect of person wyth hym. The texte.

LEt autoritie be gouerned by charitie, that in any wyse it practise no tiraunie. And on the other side, let reuerent feare holde vnder the lower sort, so as through to much sufferaunce they waxe not rebellious. For there can no concorde nor quietnes possibly be, where all is hauocke without ordre. Ouer the wyfe the husband onely hath autoritie. But the children are bounden to acknowlege the autoritie both of father and mother. Therefore accordyng to this rule, you children be curteous and obedient vnto your father and mother at al theyr honeste Christian commaundementes. For this doeth euen the equitie of nature also require, that we shoulde honour them to whome we are bounden for bringing vs in to the worlde: and be kinde vnto thē, by whose goodnes, we are nourished and broughte vp. And to be briefe, the very lawe of god commaundeth the same, and sayeth: honour thy father & thy mother. And it was not inough to geue that commaundement, as it doth in the other commaundementes, Thou shalt doe no murther. Thou shalt not steale, &c. But he added also a reward vnto it, to allure them the rather to doe theyr duetie: although those thinges that are honest, ought to be dooen frely without rewarde. But what rewarde doeth the scripture promise? That it may happen wel vnto the, sayth it, and that thou mayest be long liued vpon earth. Verely it is to be thought, that persone not to be worthy of long life, that is vnkynde and rebellious agaynst them, by whome he hath receiued the vse of his life. On the other part, you fathers abuse not your autoritie, & the obedience of your children, thinking that you may lawfully do to thē what you lust.

Ye seruaũtes be obediẽt to your bodely masters. &c,

They are children, and not bonde seruauntes. Let gentlenes mitigate autoritie. You must beware that through waiwardnes of your old age, or through strayt dealing, or immoderate frowardnes, you amend them not, but prouoke their stomakes to bee wurse. In case they doe amisse, by reason of youthe, they ought so to be admonished, that they may be rather taught than discouraged. Let this be the speciallest poynt of your charge, so to enforme them with monicions and instruccions from theyr tender yeares, and so to allure them with the exaumples of godlines, that it may appeare, they were brought vp vnder Christian parentes accordyng to the doctrine of Christe. For by this meanes shal they soner be brought to good frame, then with threatninges, or crueltie, if they be taught and not altogether compelled. You seruauntes, let it appere by you, that the profession of the gospel, hath made you better and more profitable. And the duetie that other doe to their maisters, vnto whom they are bounden after the temporall condicion of seruitude, loke you on your behalfe doe it much more aboundauntly. For the office of baptisme is not to geue this libertie, that you shoulde bee in bondage no more, but that you shoulde dooe youre bounden seruice the more diligently: nor that your will shoulde be to disdayne your maisters, because they are become brethren with you in profession, but so muche the more you ought to haue them in reuerence, and be the more afrayde to offend them: Nor do not, as the common sorte of seruauntes doth, your duetie for feare, and in your mynde curse them and watche them: but with an vpright sincere conscience obey them, considering this with your self, that you do this duetie vnto Christ, vnto whose wil you are obedient, although peraduenture your maisters deserue not that obedience. By this meanes shall it come to passe, that you shall not be lyke to the common trade of seruauntes, that dooe theyr maisters commaundementes, while they be presently in syght, for feare of displeasure. But assone as they thynke no body seeth them, than they wil do as they luste. In dede thys is to serue vnto the eye and not of a conscience, and nothing elles but to court to please men and not Christe. In whose syghte nothing is acceptable, that is counterfaytely done or els by coaccion. But be you as it becummeth the seruauntes of Christe, hartely and faythfully curteous & diligent in your dueties doing towardes your maysters, not because necessitie enforceth you, but because God so willeth you. And see you alienate not your selues from doing your dueties, albeit you haue croked and wicked mẽ to your maisters. For in dede it is an expedient forwardenes of the Gospell, that you shoulde be curteous vnto them, so that your obedience turne not vnto vngodlinesse. And considre with your selues, that you doe that vnto Christ, that you doe vnto them for the Gospels sake, and that you doe it vnto God, and not vnto men, inasmuche as you doe it to men for the loue of God. And in case you winne them vnto Christe, through your diligence, it is a righte well bestowed duetie. But and if they shew themselues vnthankeful, yet know you for a certaintie, that no man shall lose the rewarde of his well doing. And although he shal not receiue it at mans hand, yet he shall once vndoubtedly receyue it of the lord, not onely the bondman but also the freeman, whatsoeuer good turne he shall hartely bestow vpon an vnthankeful man. Now to conclude, like as those bondseruauntes that professe Christe ought to be so much the more profitable vnto their maisters, euen so is it requisite, that christiã maisters be the more gentle in commaunding their seruauntes, and in their behauiours to vse themselues

selues in such wise, as they may appeare, to court rather to be loued then feared, and to be hartely louing vnto theyr bond seruauntes, inasmuch as they be receiued into the felowship of brethren: and not alwayes ready to threate and to beate, as the common sorte of maisters is accustomed to doe. Let your seruauntes perceiue, that you are become the more gentle by reason of the Gospel, so as they also may the rather be allured vnto that professiō as wel as you, if peraduenture they haue not yet alredy professed: and considre, that maisters autoritie is but a temporall thing and onely established by mans lawe: And for all that it becummeth not vs in any wise to disturbe it: yet neuertheles there is no respect of persons with god. For he maketh neuer a whit the lesse of any mā because he is a bonde seruaunte, nor maketh the more of any manne, because he is a gentleman borne. According to mans lawes, you maisters haue power ouer your seruauntes vpon earth, but for all that in the meane tyme you haue a maister in heauen as well as they. And hys will is, that you care for youre seruauntes commoditie, through reasonable commaunding, and not to presse thē with tirannie. These thynges that we haue hitherto treated of, tend to this end, that you should aswel be lyke vnto your head Christ in holines of life, as to agree together among your selues in mutuall concorde.

Finally my brethren, be stronge through the Lorde and through the power of his might. Put on all the armoure of God, that ye maye stande againste the assaultes of the deuill. For we wrestle not against bloode and fleshe: but againste rule, against power, against worldly rulers, euen gouernoures of the darkenes of this worlde, against spirituall craftynes in heuenly thinges. Wherfore take vnto you the whole armoure of God, that ye maye be hable to resist in the euell daie, and stande perfecte in all thynges. Stande therfore, and your loynes girde with the trueth, hauyng on the brestplate of rightcousnes, and hauing shoes on youre fete, that ye maye bee prepared for the Gospell of peace. Aboue all, take to you the shilde of faithe, wherewith ye maye quenche all the fierie dartes of the wicked. And take the helmet of saluacion, and the swerde of the spirite, whiche is the worde of God. The texte.

Now this remayneth for a finall conclusyon, that forasmuche as the wicked doe lay sundry engines to ouerthrowe your tranquillitie, you must also bee armed with a strong lustie inward conscience to resist them, not with the ayde of your owne powers, but by the meane of the lorde Jesus your defendour, who will not suffer hys bodye to be destitute. Uerely as for vs, we are feble members, but he is valeaunt and mightie, that hath taken vpon him to be our protectour. Desyre therefore of him all maner of spirituall armour and weapons, that therwith being in euery poynt surely harnessed, you may be hable to stand valeauntly agaynst the assaultes of the deuil. For we haue not warre and battayl with men, whose wronges our duetie is to ouercome with pacyence. But our battayl is with wicked spirites, the enemyes and foes of Christe, whose champions and instrumentes those are, that ragingly assault vs. And by their ministery the princes and powers of deuils geue battail against vs frō aboue, and exercise theyr tirannye vpon suche as bee addycte vnto them throughe the naughtinesse of thys worlde, and lay wayte in the darkenes of this worlde for those that loue the lyght of the Gospel. Agaynste those (I say) we must necessarily abyde battayll, and they are not onely mightye of strength, but also exceadingly perfite in spirituall pollicie, and that in the coastes of the ayre, so as they may the easelier come vpon vs, and so as it is the harder for vs to apprehende

them. To warre agaynst this kinde of enemies, no humayne weapons nor ar-
mour can doe any good. But it is the onely armour of God that must defende
vs from harme. Therefore as often as you must entre battayl with your ad-
uersaries, doe alwayes, as noble warriers are accustomed, whan they haue a
doe with a daungerous enemie. Get on all your harnesse, and doe euery thyng
accordyngly, that whan the daunger of the battayl shalbe, you may be hable to
kepe your place, and stedfastly stand vpon the sure rocke Christ. Whan menne
goe to warre one agaynst an other, fyrste they couer themselues on euery syde,
that they lye not open any way to theyr enemies ordinaunce. Than they make
ready to beate backe the inuader. The middle partes of theyr bodies, because
of the tendernes, they girde with an Apron of maile. The vpper partes they
harnesse with a brest plate. Upon the legges and feete they weare bootes, and
an helmet vpon the head. Than on the lefte syde a shylde is buckled, to kepe of
all arowe shot. And so in like case, you that haue spiritual battayl, with wicked
spirites continually, in steede of the girdle, put on trueth to girde vp the loines
of your mynde, so as you stande vpryghte and shrynke not at any naughtie en-
ticement of false goodes and false opinions. For the breste plate, put on inno-
cencie and righteousnes, to kepe the inward partes of your mynd safe and sure
with the mayles of vertue and godlines. For bootes to put on the legges and
fete, loke you haue a sincere affeccion that coueteth after nothing, but such thin-
ges as be heauenly, and is afrayde of nothyng but onely of vngodlines: so as
you may be alwayes readilye prepared to defende the Gospell, whose defence
consisteth not in styrryng of tumulte but in patience and quietnesse. And for
that cause sake it is called the gospel of peace. The preachers wherof, the pro-
phete in times past respecting, was in an admiracion to considre howe excel-
lently fayre their feete were. But we must diligently see ẏ we haue in continual
readinesse on euery syde, ẏ buckeler of faythe, wherby we maye assuredly trust
to all the promyses of God. What larum so euer happeneth, with this bucke-
ler it shalbe vaynquished: what fyrie dartes so euer our subtill aduersary shall
throwe at vs, this buckeler shal kepe theim of, so as none of theim shal pearce
any parte of oure liuely membres. For what thing can wounde the soule, that
defieth death it selfe? And if you haue also with this buckler, the helmet of a vi-
gilaunt mynde, that can take good circumspect hede, you nede not in any wise
to be afraid of your health. Finally, haue alwaies in your right hand the swoord
of the spirite, aswel to cut of naughtie lustes from your mindes, and to pearce
to the inwarde partes of the harte, as also to kepe of the resistours of the gos-
pels veritie, and to suppresse falsehead, that trueth may preuayle. This swoorde
is the woorde of God, that pearceth with a constaunt power of fayth, not after
the maner of mannes cutting reason, but rather renneth through than cutteth.
For the woorde of man is but a weake watrishe woorde, forasmuche as it en-
treateth onely of vayne transitorye matters: But the woorde of god is effectu-
al, and can skil of nothing but of heauenly thinges, and pearceth through vnto
the ioyntes of the soule, and searcheth euen to the inwarde boanes and marye.
These be the enemies that Christians haue battail withal, wheras with men
they are at peace: And these are the weapõs wherwith they defend themselues
and get the victorie, not with their own powers, but by the helpe of Christ the
mightie Captayn, through whose luckie ayde theyr batayl hath good successe.

And

And praye alwayes with all maner of praier and supplication in the spirite: & watche therunto with all instaunce and supplicacion for all sainctes and for me, that vtteraunce maye bee geuen vnto me, that I maye open my mouthe frely, to vtter the secretes of my gospel (wherof I am messenger in bondes) that therein I may speake frely, as I ought to speake. But that ye may also knowe what condicion I am in, and what I doo: Tichicus the dere brother and faythfull minister in the Lorde, shall shewe you of all thynges: whome I haue sent vnto you for the same purpose, that ye might knowe what case we stande in, and that he might comforte your hartes. Peace be vnto the brethren, and loue with faith, from God the father and from the lorde Jesus Christ. Grace be with al them, whiche loue our lorde Jesus Christ vnfaynedly. Amen. The texte.

Therfore it standeth vs in hande to pray alway vnto him with continual supplicacions, and to desyre this of him from the bottome of our hartes, without ceassing in our praiers day and night, that al saintes may haue the vpper hand by this sworde of the spirite. And it is also your duetie, to helpe me with your prayers, and to beseche God that he would geue me plenteous vtteraunce of the gospel, whansoeuer I shall preache it: and that it would please him to vse my mouth as an instrument vnto his owne glory, and to your saluacion, so as I may boldly and without shrinking declare vnto al men the mistical doctrine of the gospel, wherunto all men are called indifferently. And that I be not hindred by suche as labour by all possible meanes, that the glorye of the Gospell should not be spred abrod, for the doing wherof, I am made an embassadour, yea euen now being laden with chaynes, and suffering excedingly, that I may boldely goe about the office committed vnto me. And that this mind may still perseuer with me vnto the ende, and that by the helpe of Christe, I may freely speake, as it becummeth me to speake. For it is a rebuke for a preacher of the gospel to be afrayd of any thing, that should hinder him from doyng the office of the gospell. To conclude, as concernyng the state of myne owne thinges, & howe the matter standeth with me here, you shall knowe all of Tichicus my welbeloued brother, and not a brother onely for the sinceritie of his fayth, but also a minister and an helper in the gospels businesse: whome I haue sent vnto you for this purpose, that you might know certainly in what state we are, and that you should be much coumforted by his beyng there, lest your hartes should be discouraged through myne afflictions. For I am so tyed and bounde, that the gospell of Christ doeth triumphe, notwithstanding, euen out of the prison. My prayer is, that peace and mutual loue ioyned with sincere fayth, may be vnto al the brethren. Of faith springeth charitie, & charitie nourisheth concord. These thre with prosperous procedyng, graunt vnto you God the father, and the lorde Jesus Christe. The loue and merciful goodnesse of God be for euer with all them that with an vnfained conscience and vnspotted life, loue the lorde Jesus Christe: and despysyng the transitory tryfles of this worlde, folowe the thynges that are eternall and heauenly. And to confirme this mine hartie praier, I beseche god graūt mercifully. Amen.

Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the Epistle of S. Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians.